

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

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FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8017

C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 2426

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OGEN, PFOR, CY

SUBJECT: PARLIAMENTARY VOTE ON AMERICAN STATION

REF: NICOSIA 2376; FBIS M291920

1. CYPRUS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES NOV 29 DEFEATED LYSSARIDES' MOTION CLOSE ALL AMERICAN COMMUNICATION STATIONS BY VOTE 18 TO 11. DEPUTIES DIVIDED STRICTLY ON PARTY LINES WITH 9 AKEL MPS PLUS LYSSARIDES AND FORMER EDEK MEMBER CHRISTOPHIDES VOTING FOR CLOSURE. TWO MEMBERS UNIFIED PARTY, PROGRESSIVE FRONT MP NICOS SAMPSON, AND ONE INDEPENDENT LEFT CHAMBER PRIOR TO VOTING. NO MEMBER OF CLERIDES' CENTRIST UNIFIED PARTY SPOKE IN FAVOR UNITED STATES OPERATIONS. ONLY SUPPORTING STATEMENTS CAME FROM PROGRESSIVE FRONT MP HADJI-HERACLEOUS AND INDEPENDENT PARASKEVAIDES.

2. LOCAL PRESS, EVEN THOSE FRIENDLY OUR INTERESTS, ARE TREATING CLOSEOUT MIA MILIA AND YEROLAKKOS AS ACCOMPLISHED FACT DESPITE PIO BRIEFING THAT A FINAL DECISION ON REDUCTION OR CLOSURE NOT YET TAKEN. SIMILARLY, IN YESTERDAY'S DEBATE, MPS SPOKE AS IF THERE NO RPT NO QUESTION THESE FACILITIES BEING MAINTAINED IN ANY FASHION IN FUTURE.

3. QUESTION OF U.S. PAYMENTS DID NOT ARISE DURING DEBATE. (CHRISTODOULOU HAS TOLD US HE MADE REFERENCE REFTEL TO U.S. PAYMENTS IN ORDER TO SHOW THAT THE GOVT OF CYPRUS HAD NOT BEEN DUPED AND WAS GETTING SOMETHING IN RETURN FOR PRESENCE OF STATIONS. HE ADMITTED THIS DECISION WAS TAKEN ON HIS OWN.)

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4. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH UNIFIED PARTY AND PROGRESSIVE FRONT DEPUTIES DID THE MINIMUM NECESSARY BY VOTING AGAINST LYSSARIDES' RESOLUTION (AND EVEN AKEL SEEMED MORE INTERESTED IN GETTING VOTE OUT OF THE WAY THAN MAKING PROPAGANDA), LOCAL TEMPER CAN BE JUDGED FROM LACK OF ANY EXPLICIT SUPPORT FOR US OR FOR CONTINUED PRESENCE OF FACILITIES. NOBODY EXCEPT OUR EMPLOYEES HAS EVEN PRIVATELY ASKED US TO STAY, AND NO NEWSPAPER HAS URGED IT. WE DO NOT FORESEE SIGNIFICANT PRESSURE ON FBIS KARAVAS, BUT BELIEVE THAT LEFTISTS WOULD RETURN TO THE ATTACK IF WE SHOULD DECIDE TO KEEP YEROLAKKOS.

5. ACTION REQUESTED; SINCE RRO AND NAVFAC ARE NECESSARILY PROCEEDING WITH CLOSEOUT PLANS ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM THEIR WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS, CERTAIN ASPECTS OF DETAILED PLANNING FOR DEPARTURE ARE NOW BECOMING PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE IN CYPRUS. WE TOLD FOREIGN MINISTRY (NICOSIA 2264) THAT WE DID NOT HAVE FINAL PLANS BUT WOULD INFORM IT WHEN WE DID. TO KEEP FAITH WITH FOREIGN MINISTRY IN FACE OF INCREASINGLY EXPLICIT LOCAL STORIES AS TO DIFFERENT STEPS IN PHASEOUT, WOULD APPRECIATE KNOWING WHETHER WE MAY CONSIDER RRO AND NAVFAC WASHINGTON-APPROVED PHASEOUT PLANS AS AUTHORITATIVE. (DEPARTMENT AWARE BOTH ARE EXPECTING TO BE OUT BY JUNE 30.)
MC CLOSKEY

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